

2004 Best Practices Awards

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is pleased to announce the 2004 "Best Practices Awards" in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). In order to encourage and reward outstanding practices in school food service, USDA will recognize outstanding practices in four categories in schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) participating in the NSLP and/or SBP.

The four categories include Reaching Needy Children in the Summertime, School Breakfast Program Access, Increasing Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables by Participants and the Healthy School Nutrition Environment. Each of these categories is important to a healthy school environment and has an impact on nutrition and physical activity. Please review the categories on Attachment 1.

A nomination should consist of:

- a complete and accurate description of the practice (at least 250 but not to exceed 300 words)
- appropriate numbers, such as: dollars saved or increased participation
- relevant history, impact, and/or cost effectiveness
- documenting photographs or newspaper articles
- one copy of any coloring books, posters or videos that have been developed
- name and telephone number of a contact person (these should be printed or typewritten to alleviate any question of spelling)
- mailing address
- size or average daily participation of school or LEA
- the category for the nomination

The Nomination Form is provided as Attachment 2.

The criteria, which will be used in evaluating nominees, are provided in Attachment 3.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN OUR OFFICE BY MARCH 26, 2004.

The Mountain Plains Regional office will present awards to a winner in each category. The awards are generally presented during National School Lunch Week or School Breakfast Week in conjunction with a scheduled event in your LEA.

If there are any questions, please contact Sandra Lang at (573) 751-7353.

Submit entries to:

Sandra Lang

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

School Food Services

P.O. Box 480

Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Attachments

BEST PRACTICES AWARDS CATEGORIES

Ideas are given for each category, however, these ideas are not intended as limitations. Nominations of creative or innovative ideas in all areas are encouraged. The four categories are:

Reaching Needy Children in the Summer – LEAs that expand school lunch or breakfast service under the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs during the summer months or who sponsor or vend summer feeding programs under the Summer Food Service Program to reach needy children. Nominated LEAs should receive credit for all meals served to needy children under both School Nutrition Programs and the Summer Food Service Program. Provide the best available number or estimate of the total number of meals served in June and July, School Years 2003 and 2004 by meal type; i.e., breakfasts, lunches, and snacks.

Increasing School Breakfast Program Access - Activities and/or other creative or innovative ideas that were developed to promote the school breakfast program, increase participation in an existing school breakfast program or to establish a new breakfast program in a nonparticipating site(s). Identify barriers to participation and how they were eliminated. Note any partnerships that were developed within the community to collaborate on ways to improve the breakfast program participation or to start new breakfast programs. Include activities to promote School Breakfast Week. Include enrollment and participation figures and percent of increase and/or the number of new programs established.

Increase the Consumption of Fruits/Vegetables by Participants - Develop best practices for increasing fruit (both fresh and dried) and fresh vegetable consumption. Develop partnerships with health programs like 5-A-Day whose goal is to increase the average consumption of fruits and vegetables to five or more servings daily through activities and special events. Note any impact on eating behaviors, like snack choices and increased participation in the school meal programs

Healthy School Nutrition Environment -There are six components of a healthy school nutrition environment. Each one is important and has an impact on nutrition and physical activity. The definitions of success, suggested activities, and how to's for making improvements are listed in the Guide to Local Action booklet in the Changing the Scene Kit. There are no limits to the number of components you may select. The components are:

A Commitment to Nutrition and Physical Activity
Quality School Meals
Other Healthy Food Choices
Pleasant Eating Experiences
Nutrition Education
Marketing

NOMINATION FORM

National School Lunch Program Best Practices Award
U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Service

Name of Local Education Agency or School being nominated (no individuals, please):

Mailing Address:_____

Average Daily Participation:_____ **Number of Schools:** _____

Category (*check only one*):

Reaching Needy Children in the Summer
Increasing School Breakfast Program Access
Increase Fruit/Vegetable Consumption
Healthy School Nutrition Environment

Submitted by (Type or Print Name/Title): _____

Phone Number_____ **Fax Number**_____

Mailing Address (*if different than LEA/school being nominated*):

Description of Practice (*Include information on cost, history, and impact. Supporting documents or additional pages may be attached*)

BEST PRACTICES AWARDS CRITERIA

1. Evidence of sustained excellence (20 points)

Consideration should be given to overall management of the program. Schools and school food authorities that have run a superior program for some length of time should receive the highest score.

2. Innovation (20 points)

An idea that gives a new and effective twist to an old solution or that is an innovative and successful addition to school food service should be rated accordingly. Creative and clever ideas should receive maximum ratings.

3. Impact (20 points)

Evidence of increased participation or increased support or recognition from students, parents, teachers, or the community.

4. Cost effectiveness and efficiency (20 points)

The idea should make good use of the available resources and labor. An expensive new computer system that makes a major improvement in efficiency could be cost effective if the expenditure is in proportion to the results. Manpower and budgetary requirements should be reasonable in relation to the results.

5. Transferability (10 points)

Awards should establish standards of excellence for other States to strive toward. Some judgment should be made as to how easily the idea could be implemented by other schools or LEAs.

6. Presentation (10 points)

The material should be well presented. It should be well organized, complete, clear and succinct. Although well-written material may be rated highly, objective measures of success, results, and such items as photographs or letters of support from appropriate users, i.e., students, PTA member or teachers should also be considered as part of the presentation.